

Document No. **90**

No Change in Class.

☐ Confidential

IS S' C

Auth: HR 70-3

Date: 11 JUN 1979

By: **4377**

Approved For Release 2000/08/28 : CIA-RDP78-03097A000500030032-1

1 July 1952

PROCEDURE FOR THE TESTING OF MONITOR-TRANSLATOR APPLICANTS

Standard procedure to be followed in determining the qualifications of monitor-translator applicants involves, as a general rule, three steps: (1) a personal interview, (2) a written examination, and (3) transcription and translation of a recording in the foreign language. The two tests together should ordinarily require a maximum of about four hours.

1. The Personal Interview: A discussion of the applicant's background, experience, and education should provide the interviewer with an opportunity to assess, along with these formal qualifications, the equally important qualities of interest, curiosity, adaptability, and general capacity to improve his skills in line with the special requirements of the job. These qualities may, in many cases, compensate for an only passable showing in the tests that will follow: a monitor with an initially imperfect foreign-language or English vocabulary may in the long run, with the proper drive and capacity to learn, outstrip others who seem initially much better equipped for the job by training and experience. These are, of course, intangible qualities, and it must be left to the interviewer's good judgment to counterbalance his impressions of the applicant against the more concrete results of the tests.

2. The Written Examination: This will ordinarily consist of three or four extracts from a newspaper in the foreign language, ranging from a simple, factual news item to a portion of an article or editorial containing more involved ideas and correspondingly more complex sentence structure, to be translated into clear, idiomatic English without the aid of a dictionary.

Experiments with written tests of this nature, given as a preliminary to the transcription and translation of recorded material, have shown that they reveal a good many factors not always discernible in the results of a record test. On a record test, allowances must always be made for the applicant's unfamiliarity with transcribing equipment and lack of experience with recorded media, and the subject matter selected for the test must therefore be relatively simple, with correspondingly simple sentence structure; the written test may include more complex material, and the applicant's performance should serve as a more accurate gauge of his ability to understand and express complex ideas. An applicant's translation of recorded material may be incomplete because he failed to hear certain words correctly; on the written test, the foreign-language text is complete and correct, and the translation can be judged on its own merits.

The test should, whenever possible, be corrected by someone fully conversant with the language. The results should then be evaluated, preferably by a linguist, with emphasis placed first of all upon accuracy and secondly upon the skill demonstrated by the applicant in producing smooth, readable English. His translation should be judged not only as an indication of the degree to which he is able to grasp the exact meaning of the original language, but also as a demonstration of his ability to transfer that meaning into equivalent English, the language in which his product will be utilized. A number of

This document is part of classified integrated file.
If separated from file, document is unclassified.

Approved For Release 2000/08/28 : CIA-RDP78-03097A000500030032-1

translators who, at the outset, were able to compensate for an incomplete foreign-language vocabulary with an outstanding grasp of English have developed into excellent monitors through on-the-job experience and mastery of specialized vocabularies.

The applicant's performance on the written test should reveal a number of factors: a "rough" or inadequate translation may be the result of an inadequate knowledge of the foreign language, an inadequate familiarity with English vocabulary and syntax, or inability to grasp a relatively complex thought. The manner in which he translates standard phrases or titles should serve as a gauge of his familiarity with current events: the applicant who translates the foreign words for "World Health Organization" as "International Organization of Sanitation," for example, probably has done very little reading of American newspapers.

An applicant who fails to show any promise at all in this initial test may, at the examiner's discretion, be disqualified without further testing. If his showing is at least marginally acceptable, he may pass on to the record test, the results of which should serve to corroborate the evaluation of the written examination or to counterbalance to some extent a possibly invalid judgment.

3. The Record Test: This should involve full transcription into the foreign language and translation into English of a specified portion of a foreign-language recording of no more than two or three minutes' duration. Use of a dictionary may be permitted. Reception conditions should be considerably better than average for shortwave broadcasts, and the applicant should be given some indication beforehand of the subject matter dealt with on the record. Test records should cover topics of as general a nature as possible, avoiding such highly specialized vocabularies as would normally be acquired only on the job.

It is suggested that a brief instruction sheet be handed the applicant before he begins working with the record, outlining how he should proceed and emphasizing that the evaluation of his final translation will be based both upon accuracy and upon the smoothness and readability of the English.

In order to minimize the psychological difficulty involved in working with recorded media for the first time, it is sometimes desirable, if the applicant's native language is English, that he transcribe, before the foreign-language record, a brief passage from an English record. Reception and the diction of the announcer should be sufficiently superior to make transcription simple for anyone with normal hearing and an adequate knowledge of English vocabulary and sentence structure.

In evaluating the results of the record test, it must be borne in mind that the degree of facility demonstrated initially by the applicant in transcribing material from a foreign language is not in itself sufficient to evaluate his potentialities for becoming a top-notch monitor-translator. The psychological difficulty involved in "visualizing" speech from recorded media must be taken into consideration, and the applicant's performance in the written examination, along with qualifications revealed by the interview, should be weighed with the results of the record test.

4. Morse Code Material: When the language for which the applicant is attempting to qualify is one in which an appreciable amount of Morse code is monitored, he may, if desired, be given a brief additional test involving the expansion and translation of an extract from a press transmission. This may be included in the written examination.

The applicant should be given some explanation of the nature of Morse code transmissions and of how "cablese" is expanded, and the selection should, if necessary, be doctored so as to eliminate peculiarities which would mean nothing to translators unfamiliar with specific transmissions. The selection should be brief, about a dozen lines at the most.

EXAMINATION FOR FRENCH TRANSLATOR APPLICANT

PART ONE: TRANSLATION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

Translate the following newspaper extracts into good, idiomatic English, accounting fully and clearly for every thought. Your translation will be judged on the basis of accuracy and clarity of English style.

Do not be afraid to rearrange the word order if necessary to make your translation read smoothly: A person reading your final product should not be conscious that it is a translation; it should read like an original English-language text.

I

L'Espagne Attend des Changements:

Madrid--Des informateurs monarchistes qualifient d'absurde le rapport voulant que le Généralissime Franco devienne régent d'Espagne. Pourtant, on continue à annoncer dans les milieux diplomatiques que le dictateur se prépare à faire des changements radicaux dans l'administration du pays.

II

Les Accords Franco-Indochinois:

L'assemblée nationale a commencé ce matin la discussion du projet ratifiant les accords entre le gouvernement français, d'une part, et le Laos, le Cambodge et le Vietnam, d'autre part. Le débat doit être terminé avant samedi minuit.

Le ministre de la France d'Outre-Mer, dans la première partie de son intervention, précise que "le gouvernement n'a pas l'intention de s'installer par la guerre mais d'organiser la paix."

Rappelant les déclarations faites hier par le président Vincent Auriol, le ministre ajoute:

"Contrairement aux affirmations de certaine presse, nous ne cherchons pas à prolonger la guerre. Nous ne cherchons pas je ne sais quelle reconquête. J'en donne ici, au nom du gouvernement, l'assurance solennelle. Nous voulons la paix. Nous la voulons par des moyens politiques. Pour cela, il est bien évident qu'entre l'indépendance du Vietnam et sa qualité d'état associé à l'Union Française, il n'y a pas d'incompatibilité."

III

Une Voie Dangereuse:

Il est évident que la campagne du docteur Adenauer pour le rattachement de la Sarre à l'Allemagne occidentale a dû éveiller des échos dans le territoire

sarrois lui-même. Dans ce territoire, la population sarroise d'origine est presque tout entière formée d'agriculteurs et de mineurs, tandis que les cadres administratifs et intellectuels sont formés par les Allemands introduits en Sarre soit avant 1914, soit par Hitler. Il en résulte que le gouvernement autonome sarrois rencontre la plus forte opposition dans les milieux mêmes où se trouve recruté le personnel bureaucratique sur lequel il doit s'appuyer.

C'était sans doute pour essayer de faire face à cette situation difficile que le gouvernement de M. Hoffmann fut amené à envisager les mesures quasi dictatoriales dont nous voulons, pour notre compte, espérer qu'elles seront écartées ou sérieusement amendées.

Il ne serait plus possible de parler ni de liberté de la presse, ni de liberté de réunion, ni de liberté syndicale, ni de liberté tout court dans un état où les lois projetées par le gouvernement sarrois seraient en vigueur.

IV

Quand nous raisonnons sur la place que tient la guerre dans les desseins de la Russie, nous devons avoir toujours présente à l'esprit cette affirmation du catéchisme marxiste--fortifiée chaque jour par les événements--que "le monde capitaliste se désagrège et ne saurait longtemps résister à ses propres contradictions." Ce serait donc folie de la part des Soviets que de risquer leur chance contre un Occident redoutable -- comme il serait fou de ne pas la risquer, le jour où les craquements annonciateurs donneraient à la Russie toutes les assurances d'une victoire sans combat et d'une occupation de l'Europe aussi aisée que le fut, en 1939, celle de la Pologne.

V

Material transmitted by press agencies in Morse code must be as succinct as possible in order to economize both time and expense. Consequently, as in a telegram, the unessential words -- prepositions, articles, and auxiliary verbs -- are omitted and the word order is sometimes slightly inverted. The important punctuation marks are spelled out. In French, a final acute-accented é is indicated by adding a d to the e, as in: evacued for evacué and envoyeds for envoyés.

The following paragraph is written in cablese, that is, telegraphic style. Although some words are missing, you should be able to insert the proper connectives and expand the paragraph so that it reads smoothly like any newspaper report, in good grammatical French style with all necessary prepositions, articles, etc., included.

First expand the paragraph into the form in which you would expect to find it in a newspaper, then translate it into English.

Be careful not to delete any of the words contained in the paragraph: Simply add the necessary connectives and convert the spelled-out punctuation marks into ordinary symbols.

SAIGON -- ANNONCE OFFICIELLEMENT QUE POSTE FRANCAIS FUT VIOLEMMENT
ATTAQUE PAR IMPORTANTES FORCES REBELLES COURS NUIT VINGT TROIS FEVRIER
POINT POSTE TENU PAR ELEMENTS AUTOCHTONES RESISTA VICTORIEUSEMENT TOUS ASSAULTS
MALGRE SUPERIORITE NUMERIQUE ASSAILLANT ET BOMBARDEMENT ARTILLERIE DONT
CE DERNIER DISPOSAIT POINT RENFORTS PARACHUTISTES ENVOYES SUR LIEU PERMIRENT
DEGAGER COMPLETEMENT POSTE ET MIRENT FUITE ASSAILLANTS FIN

PART TWO: TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION OF RECORDED MATERIAL

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT

1. (Optional) You have been given an English-language recording prepared from clear broadcast reception conditions. You need only transcribe that portion indicated by the examiner. Transcribe fully the portion indicated, accounting for every word. If you are unable to hear a particular word or phrase, indicate the omission by three dots, i.e.:

-0-

2. Follow the same procedure in transcribing the record in the language for which you are attempting to qualify. The examiner will indicate where to begin and where to end and will give you a brief outline of the contents of the portion you are to transcribe.

3. After you have completed your transcription, make an accurate, complete, and idiomatic English translation of the portion of your transcription indicated by the examiner. You will be permitted to use a dictionary.

MODEL TRANSLATION OF FRENCH EXAMINATION, PART ONE

I

Changes are Expected in Spain:

Madrid--Monarchist informants describe as absurd the report alleging that Generalissimo Franco is to become regent of Spain. Nevertheless, diplomatic circles continue to report that the dictator is getting ready to make radical changes in the country's administration.

II

The French-Indochinese Agreements:

The National Assembly this morning began discussion of the bill which ratifies the agreements concluded between the French Government and Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The debate is scheduled to end before midnight Saturday.

The French Minister for Overseas Territories, in the first part of his statement, makes clear that "the Government does not intend to consolidate its position by means of war, but rather to create the conditions for peace."

Referring to the statement made yesterday by President Vincent Auriol, the Minister adds:

"Contrary to the allegations of certain sectors of the press, we are not trying to prolong the war. We are not trying to undertake some nebulous reconquest. On behalf of the Government, I herewith give you my solemn assurance of this fact. We want peace. We want a peace achieved by political means. Therefore, it is quite evident that no incompatibility exists between Vietnam's independence and its status as a state associated with the French Union."

III

A Dangerous Road:

It is evident that Dr. Adenauer's campaign for the return of the Saar to Western Germany was bound to arouse repercussions in the Saar territory itself. In this territory the native-born population is composed almost entirely of farmers and miners, while on the other hand the administrative and intellectual groups are made up of Germans who were brought into the Saar either before 1914 or by Hitler. As a consequence, the autonomous Saar Government is encountering the strongest opposition precisely among those elements from which the bureaucratic personnel upon which the Government must depend are drawn.

It was undoubtedly in an attempt to cope with this difficult situation that M. Hoffmann's Government was led to consider the enactment of those quasi-dictatorial measures which we, for our part, hope to see withdrawn or drastically amended.

In a state in which laws such as those contemplated by the Saar Government are in force, it would not be possible to speak of freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of trade union activity, or of freedom pure and simple.

IV

When we speculate on the part that war plays in Russia's plans, we must always keep in mind the statement of the Marxist dogma--borne out more strongly every day by events--that "the capitalist world is disintegrating and cannot long survive its inherent contradictions." It would consequently be sheer madness on the part of the Soviets to risk their luck against a formidable West, just as it would be senseless for them not to risk it on the day when the first resounding crashes heralding the cracking-up process would provide Russia with every assurance that victory could be won without a fight and that Europe could be occupied as easily as Poland was in 1939.

V

Morse code selection:

Saigon--It is officially announced that a French post was violently attacked by strong rebel forces on the night of Feb. 23. The post, which was held by native elements, successfully withstood all the attacks despite the numerical superiority of the assaulting forces and the artillery bombardment which they were able to bring into play. Paratroop reinforcements sent to the scene made it possible to end military action at the post completely and put the attackers to flight.

/